

Remarks:

This is in response to the Office Action dated March 11, 2003. In the Office Action the Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. The Examiner also rejected Claims 1, 3-13, 16-22 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §103, based on U.S. Patent No. 5,506,772 to Kubozono et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,330,499 to Chou et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,207,611 to Gordon and U.S. Patent No. 6,263,265 to Fera.

In response to the Office Action, Applicant has introduced new claims which are believed to simplify the methodology set forth in the claims, to more distinctly identify novel and unobvious aspects of the present invention. In particular, the claims specify that the code reader is a handheld code reader which is operative to interpret the diagnostic trouble code signals from the vehicle onboard computer, and to generate a visual output signal, representative of the vehicle status, independent of any external processing resources, such as those in the vehicle or those in consoles as described in the prior art. As such, the methodology of the present invention may be implemented in a simple, inexpensive, user friendly manner that the prior art does not approach. The invention therefore takes the art of automobile diagnostics and distills essential information down to a level of information presentation that the prior art does not address. As a consequence, backyard mechanics, housewives and others can quickly check their vehicle to determine if an identified problem exists with the vehicle, on a periodic basis, in the course of an extended trip, or at any convenient time, without the need to access more complicated machinery typically found at automobile service stations and other repair facilities. The essential information to such users is whether or not there is a

problem, not a specific diagnostic trouble code signal or other detailed information, which becomes relevant only when the problem is identified and repairs to be initiated.

None of the prior art references have been able to distill the core problem status information into a handheld device that processes diagnostic codes independent of resources beyond those in the handheld code reader. Accordingly, none of the prior art references are believed to achieve or even address the level of general consumer operation that the present invention provides.

Accordingly, the application is believed to define subject matter that is patentable over the prior art. Reconsideration of the rejection of the claims is therefore respectfully requested.

Should any outstanding problems remain, or should the Examiner have any suggestions for expediting allowance of the Claims, he is invited to contact Applicant's representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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